

Message Text

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ORIGIN AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SCS-06 CA-01 HA-05 NSCE-00
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 INRE-00 /045 R

DRAFTED BY AF/E:KWAUCHOPE:AB
APPROVED BY AF/E:RPOST
AF/E:RBAKER

-----126101 012321Z /65

O 012250Z MAY 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY BONN IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 110951

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: UG, CASC (WILKERSON, DR. RALPH A.)

SUBJECT:TRAVEL OF AMERICANS TO UGANDA

1. DR. RALPH A. WILKERSON, PASTOR OF THE MELODYLAND CHRISTIAN CENTER OF ANAHEIM, CALIFORNIA, CALLED ON THE DEPARTMENT MAY 1 TO DISCUSS HIS PROPOSED VISIT TO UGANDA. DR. WILKERSON PLANS TO TRAVEL TO KAMPALA ALONG WITH THREE AMCIT COLLEAGUES AND A UGANDAN STUDENT IN ORDER TO MEET WITH PRESIDENT AMIN. HIS PRESENT PLAN REQUIRES HIM TO LEAVE FOR UGANDA IMMEDIATELY IN ORDER TO RESPOND TO A RECENT TELEPHONIC INVITATION FROM AMIN WHICH WAS RECONFIRMED BY A COMMERCIAL TELEGRAM APRIL 28. WILKERSON PROPOSES TO DISCUSS AMIN'S NEGATIVE IMAGE IN THE WEST BECAUSE OF HIS ABUSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS, AND TO ATTEMPT TO EFFECT A CHANGE IN AMIN'S POLICIES BY APPEALING TO THE LATTER'S CONSCIENCE.

2. WILKERSON WAS INFORMED OF THE DEPARTMENT'S POLICY
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ADVISING AMERICANS AGAINST VISITING UGANDA, AND HE WAS GIVEN SOME BACKGROUND ON THE POLITICAL SITUATION IN THAT COUNTRY. WILKERSON WAS FURTHER ADVISED THAT, DESPITE THE TELEGRAM OF INVITATION FROM AMIN, HE AND HIS COLLEAGUES SHOULD OBTAIN THE APPROPRIATE UGANDAN VISAS, AND KENYAN VISAS IF THEY TRAVEL TO KAMPALA VIA NAIROBI. WILKERSON SAID IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT HE WOULD TRAVEL FIRST TO NAIROBI TO ARRANGE

ONWARD TRANSPORTATION WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF A MISSIONARY FRIEND IN KENYA. SUCH TRAVEL MIGHT ENTAIL THE MISSIONARY FLYING WILKERSON IN A PRIVATE AIRCRAFT TO UGANDA.

3. FOR BONN: PLEASE PASS THE FOREGOING TO THE FRG FOREIGN OFFICE FOR THEIR EMBASSY IN KAMPALA.

4. FYI: WILKERSON STATES THAT, IN ADDITION TO BEING THE AUTHOR OF A "BEST-SELLING" BOOK ON HIS RELIGIOUS PHILOSOPHY, HE HAS OVER 12,000 IN HIS CONGREGATION AND HAS A WEEKLY RADIO AUDIENCE OF 50 MILLION. HE CLAIMS TO BE AN ACQUAINTANCE OF PRESIDENT CARTER'S SISTER RUTH STAPLETON, AND SAID HE WAS TO MEET WITH MRS. CARTER AFTER HIS CALL AT THE DEPARTMENT. HE SAID HE HAD RECENTLY HAD PERSONAL DISCUSSIONS WITH PRESIDENT SADAT AND PRIME MINISTER BEGIN TO PROMOTE PEACE IN THE MIDDLE EAST. END FYI.
CHRISTOPHER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE110951
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: KWAUCHOPE:AB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780186-0058
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t197805104/aaaadljip.tel
Line Count: 80
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7c9da494-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 27 apr 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2527197
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TRAVEL OF AMERICANS TO UGANDA
TAGS: CASC, UG, US, GE, (WILKERSON, RALPH A)
To: BONN NAIROBI
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7c9da494-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014